

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 096 646

CS 201 474

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TITLE Descriptive Writing Unit.
INSTITUTION District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 39p.
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.75 HC-\$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Composition Skills (Literary); *Creative Writing; *Descriptive Writing; English Instruction; Evaluation Methods; Secondary Education; *Teaching Guides; *Units of Study (Subject Fields); *Writing Exercises; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS Elementary Secondary Education Act Title III; ESEA Title III

ABSTRACT

A twelve lesson descriptive writing unit for tenth graders is presented in this document. Each lesson lists one or more behavioral objectives, materials needed, the procedures to follow, the method of evaluation, comments about the lesson by the teacher who used the plan, and suggestions for future use. Copies of the pre-test, the worksheets, assignment and instruction sheets, and evaluation forms are included. Throughout the unit the students evaluate each others' writing and then discuss both the writing and the evaluation. Of the 49 students who completed this unit, 43 felt the lessons helped them improve their writing. (T0)

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

TITLE III PROJECT

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS DEVELOP ENGLISH CURRICULUM

DESCRIPTIVE WRITING UNIT

by

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Rationale

During the month of November, my classes drew up a list of ten objectives that they felt they should accomplish by the end of the tenth grade. One of those objectives dealt with being able to write a descriptive essay. This unit was designed to accomplish that goal.

The evaluation method used in the unit is very important. A majority of the students felt that they wanted more "voice" in the evaluation of their papers. They wanted to know exactly "why" they received certain grades. Although the method is time consuming, it is valuable and worthwhile.

This unit was done with tenth grade classes, but perhaps with some revision it could be incorporated in the curriculum of higher grade levels.

Objectives

Students will complete a written pre-test on descriptive writing, as individuals and as a group.

Students will discuss and vote on a grading system for this unit.

Students will discuss and write descriptive words.

Students will fill in the blanks of a selection by Ray Bradbury with descriptive words.

Students will list at least five descriptive words about a picture, express in writing the feelings the picture arouses in them, share their composition with each other, and give one another the benefit of their reactions to what they have written.

Students will write similes and metaphors.

Students will work in groups to discuss and write metaphors.

Students will evaluate through discussion yesterday's work.

Students will discuss sensory details in descriptive writing and play a game using sensory details.

Students will write a character description.

Students will evaluate their papers to give themselves a grade.

Students will continue to confer with teacher.

Students will evaluate the unit.

Students will write a final descriptive paper.

Materials

Ditto copies of pre-test

5 to 6 objects

paper (composition)

newsprint

felt pens

excerpt "A Sound of Thunder" by Ray Bradbury

worksheet on descriptive writing

pictures from magazines mounted and numbered

evaluation forms

paper clips

copies of "The Chrysanthemums" by John Steinbeck

worksheet on metaphors

blackboard

slips of paper

copies of "Describing Vividly"

a man's hat, sunglasses, and a cigarette

a woman's ribbon, earrings, gloves and perfume

copies of "Character Description"

Student folders with papers in them

LESSON I

Objective

Students will complete a written pre-test on descriptive writing, as individuals and as a group.

Materials

Ditto copies of pre-test

5 - 6 objects

paper

Procedures

As students enter the room, hand out pre-test and paper attached.

Allow students 20 minutes to complete Part I.

When Part I is completed, have students who described the same object sit in groups. Pass out Part II. Allow 15 minutes for completion.

After 15 minutes, remind students to move on to Part II.

Pass out paperclips to recorders.

At the end of the period, collect papers.

Evaluation

Completed pre-tests

Comment

This proved to be a successful pre-test in measuring students ability. A high rate of interest and enthusiasm was shown by the students for such a test.

Name
Date

Pre-test on Descriptive Writing

PART I

Please read and follow the directions carefully. Allow yourself 20 minutes to complete Part I.

On the front table are several objects. Select one of the objects to describe. How would you describe the object? List five words that describe the object.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now that you have listed five words describing the object, write one complete sentence using the best two or three descriptive words that you wrote above.

GOOD! NOW MOVE ON

From the sentence that you wrote above, develop a paragraph, as least five sentences long, that describes the object. Use the sentence that you wrote as the first sentence of your paragraph.

BEAUTIFUL! NOW TAKE A BREATH. READ OVER WHAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN AND MOVE ON.

FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS are expressions that create a picture of something similar to the object you want to describe.

A SIMILE is a figurative expression. A simile is a comparison that uses the word "like" or the word "as".

The meat is as tough as leather.
The storm snapped the trees like matches.

Now you try it. Write two similes comparing your object to something else.

as

like

Another figurative expression is a METAPHOR. This type of expression simply makes the comparison. The words "like" and "as" are not used.

The fog came in on cat's paws.
Her brother parroted everything she said.

The first metaphor compares the way the fog comes in with the sound of a cat walking.

The second metaphor compares the way a boy repeats everything with the way a parrot repeats.

Now you try it. Write a metaphor comparing your object to something else. REMEMBER* Do not use "like" or "as".

STOP. Read over your paper and wait for your teacher for further instructions.

Name

PART II

All of you in this group have described the same object. Now it is time to discuss and compare. Allow 15 minutes for Part II. Answer the following questions.

WORDS

Does anyone in your group have the same words as you have?

What are they?

What two words were used by someone else that you did not use?

SENTENCE

Did anyone use the same two or three words that you used in your sentence?

What are they?

Is your sentence similar to anyone else's in your group?

Whose?

PARAGRAPH

Did anyone else in your group describe the object similar to the way you described it? Who?

Did anyone have a very unusual description? Who?

FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Did anyone in your group have difficulty writing a simile or a metaphor? Who?

Did anyone use the same simile as you? Who?

Did anyone use the same metaphor as you? Who?

WOW! You've worked hard, but that's not all.

PART III

From your discussion of each other's papers, as a group write a paragraph using ideas from everyone's paper to describe your group's object.

Select a recorder to write the paragraph for the group. The recorder should put everyone's name on the paper. The recorder should also paperclip everyone's papers together and hand them in at the end of the period.

LESSON II

Objectives

Students will discuss and vote on a grading system for this unit.

Students will discuss and write descriptive words.

Materials

Newsprint

Felt pens

Procedure

Ask students if they have any suggestions for a grading system for this unit. Discuss what is brought up by students. Vote on the suggestions offered.

Explain to students that from the pre-test I found that many times they used words that were not specific, concrete descriptive words. Give an example. Today we will discuss and write descriptive words. The following should come out of the discussion as main points.

In a sense, every word is a descriptive word. Descriptive words are words which point to the color, shape, size, weight, texture, and any other qualities of a subject. One of the main purposes of using descriptive words is to make the reader feel and see clearly what is being described. Descriptive words show rather than tell.

Using newsprint which is taped on the walls around the room and labelled, have three students for each word write under the word as many concrete descriptive words as possible. Allow about 10 minutes for this activity.

Words Used on Newsprint

big
brown
round

heavy
walk
talk

cut
burn
soft

red
fell
clear

Discuss words that students added. Are they precise?
Concrete? Do they show rather than tell?

Write on the blackboard the following:

a sea wave a dish of jello
a lock of hair a fly
a cat's paw

Ask students what qualities come to mind when the items
are thought of. List qualities they give and discuss.

Have a student summarize what has been said about
descriptive words.

Evaluation

Written descriptive words

Discussion

Grading system

Comment

For the grading system, students decided that all papers
would be read by the teacher. The teacher would write ex-
tensive comments on the paper and put the paper in student's
folder. Towards the end of the unit, the teacher would
confer with each student to discuss papers and determine a
grade. At any time during the unit, students could get
folders and look over papers.

LESSON III

Objective

Students will fill in the blanks of a selection by Ray Bradbury with descriptive words.

Materials

Copies of the excerpt "A Sound of Thunder" by Ray Bradbury

Picture of dinosaur

Procedure

Show picture of dinosaur to class. Ask students for some words to describe it. Write on board.

Pass out copies of "A Sound of Thunder". Explain to class that they are to fill in the blanks of the selection with a descriptive words. Allow 20 - 25 minutes for class to work.

Ask volunteers to read what they wrote. Discuss certain words that they used. Tell class the words Bradbury used in his selection. Discuss his use of descriptive words and how they create a single effect.

Rewrite first two sentences on blackboard.

It came on striding legs. It towered above half the trees, a god, folding its claws close to its chest.

Explain that descriptive words are left out. Sentences are flat. Bradbury made the dinosaur life-like by using clusters of precise, descriptive words. The words that he uses give the dinosaur size, shape and weight. Not only do they reveal physical qualities but also increase the horror of the dinosaur. Each word plays a part in creating this single effect.

Have a student summarize the lesson.

Evaluation

Completion of selection

Discussion

Comment

The completion of the selection proved difficult for many students. Perhaps a less difficult selection could be used.

Name _____

Date _____

From "A Sound of Thunder" by Ray Bradbury

Out of the _____, one hundred yards away, came Tyrannosaurus Rex.

It came on great _____, _____, _____ legs. It _____ thirty feet above half of the trees, a _____ folding its _____ claws close to its _____ chest. Each lower leg was a piston, a thousand pounds of _____ bone, sunk in _____ of muscle, sheathed over in a gleam of _____ skin like the mail of a terrible warrior. Each thigh was a ton of _____, _____, and _____. And from the _____ breathing cage of the upper body those two _____ arms _____ out front, arms with hands which might pick up and examine men like _____, while the _____ neck coiled. And the head itself, a ton of _____, lifted easily upon the sky. Its mouth _____, exposing a fence of teeth like _____. Its eyes rolled, _____, empty of all expression save hunger. It closed its mouth in a _____ grin. It ran, its pelvic bones crushing aside trees and bushes, its _____ feet clawing damp earth leaving prints _____ inches deep, whenever it settled its weight. It ran with a _____ step, far too poised and balanced for its ten tones. It moved into a sunlit arena warily, its _____ reptile hand _____ the air.

Name _____

Date _____

From "A Sound of Thunder" by Ray Bradbury

POSSIBLE FILL-INS

Out of the mist, one hundred yards away, came Tyrannosaurus Rex.

It came on great oiled, resilient, striding legs. It towered thirty feet above half of the trees, a great evil god folding its delicate watchmaker's claws close to its oily reptilian chest. Each lower leg was a piston, a thousand pounds of white bone, sunk in thick ropes of muscle, sheathed over in a gleam of pebbled skin like the mail of a terrible warrior. Each thigh was a ton of meat, ivory, and steel mesh. And from the great breathing cage of the upper body those two delicate arms dangled out front, arms with hands which might pick up and examine men like toys, while the snake neck coiled. And the head itself, a ton of sculptured stone, lifted easily upon the sky. Its mouth gaped, exposing a fence of teeth like daggers. Its eyes rolled, ostrich eggs, empty of all expression save hunger. It closed its mouth in a death grin. It ran, its pelvic bones crushing aside trees and bushes, its taloned feet clawing damp earth, leaving prints six inches deep wherever it settled its weight. It ran with a gliding ballet step, far too poised and balanced for its ten tons. It moved into a sunlit arena warily, its beautifully reptile hand feeling the air.

This worksheet may be used with students who may have difficulty with Bradbury's excerpt.

Student Material 12 -- UNIT EXAM

Last name

First name

VIVID WRITING: DESCRIPTIVE WORDS

For each blank in the paragraph below, select the word or phrase which is the most vivid or the most precise. Write the letter of your choice in the Answer Column. Read through the entire paragraph before selecting your answers.

	Answer Column 4
Hidden in a _____ (A) nice (B) secluded (C) pretty	_____ 1
desert canyon, a band of wild horses grazed _____. (A) lazily (B) motionlessly (C) noisily	_____ 2
_____ they stopped (A) Suddenly (B) Soon (C) Eventually	_____ 3
eating, warned by an alien sound. The mares _____ into small groups, (A) moved (B) went (C) gathered	_____ 4
some whinnying, others silent; the stallions waited, tense and alert. Over the far-off ridge a tiny figure _____ (A) emerged (B) sprang (C) became dis-	_____ 5
_____ tinct. The cowboy edged closer to the wild horses, lasso in hand. The herd waited _____ (A) bravely (B) _____	
_____, ready to follow their stallion calmly (C) nervously	_____ 6
chief. The cowboy veered his pinto toward the stallion, but a sudden _____ (A) movement (B) shift	_____ 7
_____ in the wind (C) scent _____ (A) revealed (B) disclosed	

_____ him as an enemy. Just as the _____ 8
(C) confirmed
cowboy jabbed his spurs into his pony's flank,
the stallion reared, then _____
(A) hurried (B) romped
(C) galloped toward the canyon rim. The stallion's _____ 9
band swept after him in frenzied flight. It was
no good, now, the cowboy knew. He reined his
pony sharply, then sat quiet as the last fleeting
horse _____ over the _____ 10
(A) went (B) vanished (C) scampered
canyon rim.

CHARACTERIZATION

Read carefully the three paragraphs below. Then print in the Answer Column the letter of the paragraph which best answers each question.

- A. Pete was fearless. At least I never saw him afraid. He had a fine, honest smile that came quickly and convinced people of his sincerity. A hard worker, he expected hard work from others. He knew how to handle cattle: I never saw him rough with stock, and he rarely asked for help. He made light of the skills which had made him top hand at the Bar-H. He was lithe and quick in spite of his heavy build; except for his graying hair, he could easily have passed for a man of thirty. He took a lot of ribbing about "getting old", but every one of us knew that Pete would do a lot more riding before he'd step down as top hand.
- B. Walter leaned into the blizzard, dredging through waist-high drifts. He wanted to turn back: it seemed ridiculous to pit his small strength against the force of the storm. But he couldn't afford to lost that calf. "You'll never make it through the winter," they'd said. "Running a ranch is a man's job." Angrily Walter fought the swirling, stinging snow. I'll show them who's a man, he thought as he battled his way toward the barn.
- C. Frank was quick witted. As soon as he saw the spotted pony he realized that he had stumbled on the stage robber the sheriff was looking for. The pony's markings were exactly those the driver had described. Urging his black stallion ahead, he galloped after the outlaw, steadily narrowing the gap between them. As Frank came abreast of the pinto, the bandit drew his Colt, but before he could shoot, Frank jumped him and pulled him to the ground. The two men grappled for the gun. Finally Frank wrenched it from the outlaw's grip. "All right," he said, "get on your horse and head back to town. The sheriff'll be mighty glad to see you."

In which paragraph (A, B, or C)...

Answer
Column 5

- | | |
|--|---------|
| is the character most fully described? | _____ 1 |
| is the characterization closest to a
stereotype? | _____ 2 |
| is the character revealed through his
feelings and actions? | _____ 3 |
| is the character least believable? | _____ 4 |

is the character a young man?	_____ 5
are the character's physical appearance and personality both described?	_____ 6
is there a character whom you might recognize in real life?	_____ 7
is the character determined to prove himself?	_____ 8
is the character most like the hero in a poor quality movie?	_____ 9
is there a characterization which reveals something important to the action described?	_____ 10

LESSON IV

Objective

Students will list at least five descriptive words about a picture, express in writing the feelings the picture arouses in them, share their compositions with each other, and give one another the benefit of their reactions to what they have written.

Materials

Worksheet

Pictures from magazines mounted and numbered

Evaluation forms

Paper clips

Composition paper

Procedure

As students enter the classroom, pass out writing packets.

Students will follow the directions on the worksheet.

Evaluation

Compositions

Evaluation forms

Comment

This proved to be a two day lesson. The first day was used to select pictures and write. The second day was used to evaluate and discuss papers.

Students commented on how much they enjoyed the lesson.

WORKSHEET FOR THE DAY

Please read the worksheet carefully and then follow directions.

Today we are going to express in writing the feelings a picture arouses in us, share our compositions with each other, and give one another the benefit of our reactions to what they have written.

Please read and follow this procedure:

Select a picture that interests you from the front table.

List at least five descriptive words about the picture you selected.

Write about the feelings it arouses in you, giving enough description so that someone reading your essay could identify the picture. Plan to take no more than a half hour to write.

When you finish, give the essay and picture to your teacher. If you finish ahead of others, check the new books on the rack, you may find one that you like.

After a half hour, essays and evaluation forms will be passed out. Pictures to be identified will be taped on the blackboard. As soon as you review one essay, put it on the table and give the form to your teacher. Try to review four essays by the end of the period. Do not mark papers. Write only on evaluation forms.

Tomorrow your essays and evaluation forms will be returned to you, and you will have time to read the evaluations and confer with each other about them.

EVALUATION FORM

Name of Reader

Name of Writer

Number of picture described

Things you liked about essay

Things you think could be improved

LESSON V

Objective

Students will write similes and metaphors.

Materials

ditto copies of "The Chrysanthemums" by John Steinbeck
newsprint

magic markers

Procedure

Have class read "The Chrysanthemums" by Steinbeck

Discuss his use of simile and metaphor in describing the shape of Salinas Valley, the characteristics of the settling fog, the dark land, the river, and the vegetation.

Discuss simile and metaphor. Have students give examples.

Draw students' attention to the newsprint taped on the walls. Explain that the similes written on the newsprint are worn-out. They are to go forward and write an original one. (The teacher may participate in this.)

He ran like a deer.

The boy eats like a horse.

She is as graceful as a swan.

The baby seems as happy as a lark.

The battery is deader than a doornail.

Discuss what students wrote.

Follow the same procedure with metaphors.

a busy office

sound of car horns

strip of highway in moonlight

empty house

soft hair of newborn puppy

Discuss what students wrote.

Have one student summarize lesson.

Evaluation

Written metaphors and similes

Comment

Students were still confused about metaphors after further explanation. The next lesson was devised to help clear up that confusion.

The following game, "In the Bag" was used with one class to explain and use similes.

Bring in several objects inside a paper bag. On the outside of the bag, write in large letters the type of object it is: Sports Equipment, Clothing, Kitchen Utensil, Auto Part, etc. Divide the class into two teams. As the owner of the first bag holds it up, members of the other team take turns asking questions about it. For example: Is it as prickly as a porcupine? Is it curved as a snail shell?

Each team gets three guesses as to exactly what the object is. Each wrong guess costs the team one point; each right guess earns five points. If the team is stumped after three guesses or five minutes (whichever comes sooner), the other team gets five points. The highest score wins.

Appeal Through Simile and Metaphor

The high gray-flannel fog of winter closed off the Salinas Valley from the sky and from all the rest of the world. On every side it sat like a lid on the mountains and made of the great valley a closed pot. On the broad, level land floor the gang plows bit deep and left the black earth shining like metal where the shares had cut. On the foothill ranches across the Salinas River, the yellow stubble fields seemed to be bathed in pale cold sunshine, but there was no sunshine in the valley now in December. The thick willow scrub along the river flamed with sharp and positive yellow leaves.

From "The Chrysanthemums" by John Steinbeck

LESSON VI

Objective

Students will work in groups to discuss and write metaphors.

Materials

newsprint
copies of worksheet
magic markers
composition paper

Procedure

Explain to class that they will get into groups according to the number at the top of their worksheet. All students with number one on the worksheet will be in Group I, and so on to Group IV. Pass out worksheets.

Students will follow the directions on the worksheet.

Evaluation

Completed worksheets

Comments

This lesson helped clear up the confusion about metaphors, but students expressed a dislike for the lesson in general.

The "sharing" part of the lesson did not take place because of teacher's illness and the Christmas holidays. I thought the sharing would be stale after a two week break.

Using Metaphors

Please read and follow the directions carefully.

Read "Southbound on the Freeway".

There is only one definitely stated comparison in the poem.

The entire poem is a series of short implied comparisons.

In your group, discuss the framework of the poem:

Who is the tourist?

Where is Orbitville?

What is the tourist looking at?

Select a recorder in your group. Be sure that the recorder puts your name on the newsprint.

Write in one column the different objects the tourist sees. Beside each object, write the actual name you would use.

Example: Transparent parts windows

After this is completed and everyone in the group agrees with what has been written, continue with the next exercise.

Your group has been given a sheet of newsprint with a sentence on it and a magic marker.

Use the sentence on the paper as a topic sentence for a brief description.

As a group, offer suggestions for additional sentences that will extend the first metaphor and build toward a full description of an imagined scene.

Have the recorder in your group write down the group's ideas on the lined paper.

After getting everyone's ideas for comparisons and descriptions, the recorder should write the finished description on the newsprint provided.

Tomorrow we will share our writing with the rest of the class for evaluation.

"Southbound on the Freeway"

material deleted

due to

copyright

restrictions

From To Mix with Time by May Swenson

LESSON VII

Objective

Students will evaluate yesterday's work.

Materials

Newsprint from yesterday taped on walls.

Procedure

Begin with newsprint of "Southbound on the Freeway". Starting with Group I, have students identify their list and discuss what they wrote. The rest of the class should act as a panel of evaluators and approve or question the various comparisons. The panel should be responsible for pointing out any metaphors missed by the group. Follow this procedure for each group.

Hang the descriptions on the wall. Beginning with Group IV, have the recorder read the description. The rest of the class should discuss what was written in terms of the use of metaphor and descriptive words.

Evaluation

Discussion

Comment

Although this part of the lesson on metaphors was not used, I included it in this unit to show how I would have concluded the lesson.

LESSON VIII

Objective

Students will discuss sensory details in descriptive writing and play a game using sensory details.

Materials

blackboard

slips of paper

copies of "Describing Vividly"

Procedure

Discuss with students the idea that in descriptive writing sensory details are used to make the reader vividly aware of whatever is being described.

Discuss the five senses and how we use them everyday.

Pass out copies of "Describing Vividly". Read and discuss.

Call students' attention to the blackboard. Using the list written on the blackboard, what sensory details can be added to them.

Fried chicken carnival snowstorm New Year's Eve

Have students suggest sensory details and write on the blackboard what they suggest.

Pass out a slip of paper to each student with an activity, place, or whatever written on it. Have students list words that appeal to at least two senses about the activity or place that they have. Students should be as specific as possible because the rest of the class will have to guess at whatever it is.

Suggestions of activities and places

circus	hailstorm
waterbed	traffic jam
car starting on a cold morning	supermarket
watermelon	library
dump yard	3:00 at Wilson
fire in fireplace	cafeteria
cutting the grass	airport
washing dishes	roller coaster ride
Redskin - Dallas game	cloud
school gym	bell
chemistry lab	picnic
sewing room	dog fight
hospital ward	zoo
Christmas dinner	

After students have completed writing, have each student read off his/her list. The class should guess at what is being described.

Homework assignment: Students are to imagine that they are trying to describe a memorable scene to a friend who has been blind since birth. They can use any sensory details except those that appeal to the sense of sight.

Evaluation

Game

Comment

This proved to be a very exciting lesson in terms of student enjoyment and imaginative sensory details written by students.

Describing Vividly

Let's take an apple. Suppose a writer "sees" this apple in his mind's eye. Can you see it? Not yet. All you can do is to imagine an apple of your own or to think in a general way of the fruit commonly known as "apple".

How can a writer give his apple reality? First, he can say what the apple looks like: Is it red or green? large or small? smooth or wrinkled? Probably none of these entirely? So he must specify.

Once questions like these have been answered, you can "see" the apple. But that is not enough. There are other senses to be included in the description:

How does it feel? Cool or warm? plump or withered? firm or soft? bruised or in tact?

What does it smell like? Aged, like cider or vinegar? sweet as a spring orchard? mellow or tart? fresh or stale? juicy or acid?

What does it sound like when you shake it? roll it? drop it? bite into it?

What does it taste like? How does it feel against the teeth? against the tongue? Is it bitter or bland? unripe or rotten? crisp or mushy? Is it a cooking apple or an eating apple?

Once these questions have been answered, the apple has something of a life of its own. It has color, shape, texture, substance.

LESSON IX

Objective

Students will write a character description.

Materials

a man's hat, sunglasses and a cigarette

a woman's ribbon, earrings, gloves and perfume

ditto copies of "Character Description"

Procedure

Ask several students to describe you (the teacher). Ask how they formed these impressions about you.

Hand out ditto copies of "Character Description". Discuss.

Have students view materials on table. Tell them to use their imaginations and write a character description suggested by the articles, either the male or female articles.

Have students write.

If time allows, have volunteer students read their papers aloud.

Evaluation

Written character descriptions.

Comment

Students really used their imaginations and wrote outstanding papers. They also enjoyed hearing how their classmates described the character. Students were apprehensive about describing the teacher. Perhaps picking a well-known figure should have been used.

Character Description

There are generally two ways to describe a person.

1. Objective - gives an accurate photographic account of the subject. Tells little about the subject except physical description.
2. Impressionistic - reflects writer's feelings and reactions. Gives a total impression on what person is like. Reaction is based not only on the subject's physical appearance, but also on how he acts, talks, dresses, what he says and what other people say about him.

When you want to describe a person, you usually begin with your overall reaction: "She's a cute girl" or "You can tell he doesn't care what people think of him." Then you give details to support that impression. A skillful writer creates a character by carefully selecting details that add up to a main impression.

Every person is a combination of many qualities. A skillful writer concentrates on those qualities that make the person he is describing different from other people. He may describe several qualities, but they are usually closely related, so that they add up to a single main impression in the reader's mind.

A good description of a person must reveal what the person is - the truth about him - as the writer perceives the truth. A well-written description is not a collection of unrelated facts.

A writer communicates a picture to the reader's mind through selection and organization of details that develop a main impression.

LESSON X

Objective

Students will evaluate their papers to give themselves a grade.

Materials

Student folders with papers in them.

Procedure

Pass out student folder with all papers written thus far in them. The teacher has already read all the papers and has written comments on them.

Explain to students that they are to read over the papers and the comments written on them. They are to decide what grade they would give their papers. Students should write the grade on the top of their papers.

After about 15 minutes, the teacher should begin individual conferences with students to discuss the papers and the grades.

Evaluation

Student evaluation of papers.

Comment

This proved to be an excellent method of evaluation. It is time consuming and took two days to complete all conferences.

LESSON XI

Objective

Students will continue to confer with teacher.

Students will evaluate the unit.

Materials

Student folders with paper in them

Paper

Procedure

Explain to students that they will evaluate the unit by answering several questions and adding comments. Questions are written on the blackboard.

While this is going on, the teacher and students will continue their conferences.

Evaluation

Student evaluation of papers

Unit evaluation

Unit Evaluation

1. Do you feel that your writing has improved in any way?
How?
2. What could have been included in this unit that would have improved your writing skills?
3. What would you have left out of this unit? Why?
4. What did you enjoy the most about this unit?
5. What did you enjoy the least about this unit?
6. Add any comments you would like to make.

LESSON XII

Objective

Students will write a final descriptive paper.

Materials

Paper

Procedure

Explain to the class that the final evaluation of their work in this unit will be a composition using as many descriptive words, simile and metaphor and sensory details. They may write on anything they would like. If they can think of nothing, offer a few suggestions - a waterfall, bargain basement of a department store, a heatwave in a small town, a crowded party, fireworks display, city jail, meat market or pine forest.

Remind students to proofread their papers before handing them in.

Allow remainder of period for students to write.

Evaluation

Compositions

UNIT EVALUATION

1. Do you feel that your writing has improved in any way?

Six "no" responses. One student felt she is not creative and therefore could not improve in writing. Others gave no reason why not. Forty-three "yes" responses.

How?

easier to express myself
using my imagination
become more aware
more dramatic
take my time
with practice and
experience
use descriptive words
more effectively
beginning to make sense
vocabulary in writing
write more freely
gives better overall
picture
more descriptive
using metaphors
more spontaneous

more specific
knowing "mechanics"
express feelings without
being shy
spelling
writing sentences
range of words and
completeness
more detailed

2. What could have been included in this unit that would have improved your writing skills?

more on descriptive words
don't know
paragraph structures
more interesting subjects
more practice assignments
more spelling
writing short stories
more about metaphors
more specific writing projects
"deep writing"
nothing - "all I need is a subject and a classroom
atmosphere" to write my best.
using adjectives

3. What would you have left out of this unit? Why?

evaluating other people's papers
nothing
describing pictures

(Continued)

writing on specific things
description for a blind person
all was good and fun
pleased with your ideas
character description
group work on metaphor
the whole unit

4. What did you enjoy the most about the unit?

using imagination
pre-test
nothing
description to a blind person
whole unit
reading character descriptions
describing pictures and evaluating others' work
learning
write about things I never really thought about
a lot of things
describing things
creativity allowed
writing

5. What did you enjoy the least?

Nothing
criticizing other people's papers
describing pictures
character description
Completion of "A Sound of Thunder"
No comment
writing similes and metaphors
boring topics
evaluating my papers.

6. Comments

more filling in, like the dinosaur
I have learned a lot about descriptive writing and
hope that I can continue to put it to good use
Evaluation of each other's papers, in this case only,
is a good idea. However, with essays, poems, etc.,
I don't think kids' evaluations help.